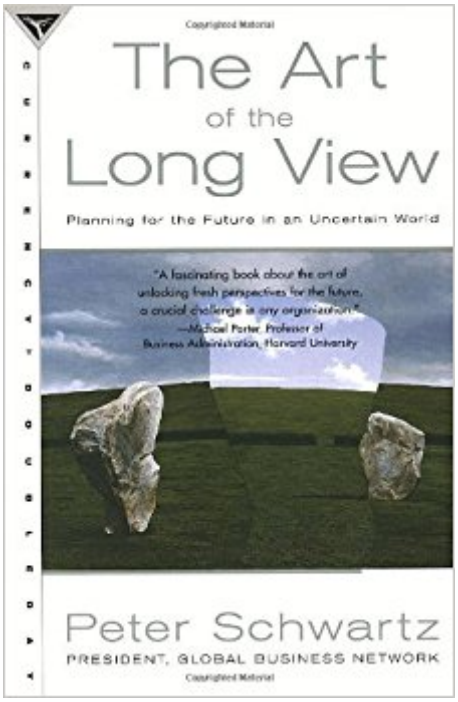
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The Art Of The Long View: Planning For The Future In An Uncertain World



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Synopsis

What increasingly affects all of us, whether professional planners or individuals preparing for a better future, is not the tangibles of lifeÃ¢â ¬â •bottom-line numbers, for instanceÃ¢â ¬â •but the intangibles: our hopes and fears, our beliefs and dreams. Only storiesÃ¢â ¬â •scenariosÃ¢â ¬â •and our ability to visualize different kinds of futures adequately capture these intangibles.In The Art of the Long View, now for the first time in paperback and with the addition of an all-new User's Guide, Peter Schwartz outlines the "scenaric" approach, giving you the tools for developing a strategic vision within your business.Schwartz describes the new techniques, originally developed within Royal/Dutch Shell, based on many of his firsthand scenario exercises with the world's leading institutions and companies, including the White House, EPA, BellSouth, PG&E, and the International Stock Exchange.

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Customer Reviews

What increasingly affects all of us, whether professional planners or individuals preparing for a better future, is not the tangibles of life - bottom-line numbers, for instance - but the intangibles: our hopes and fears, our beliefs and dreams. Only stories - scenarios - and our ability to visualize different kinds of futures adequately capture these intangibles. In The Art of the Long View, now for the first time in paperback and with the addition of an all-new User's Guide, Peter Schwartz outlines the "scenaric" approach, giving you the tools for developing a strategic vision within your business. Schwartz describes the new techniques, originally developed within Royal/Dutch Shell, based on

many of his firsthand scenario exercises with the world’s leading institutions and companies, including the White House, EPA, BellSouth, PG&E, and the International Stock Exchange.

Author and president of an international consulting firm, Peter Schwartz presents lessons in thinking for the future. Schwartz offers scenarios from the oil industry that can be applied to all aspects of life. His first-hand accounts, originally developed for Royal Dutch/Shell, are invaluable tools for creative thinking in one’s personal life and in business. Schwartz’s methods will enable anyone to think more creatively. These tapes offer lessons not found elsewhere. E.L.C. (c)AudioFile, Portland, Maine --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I’m reviewing the 1996 edition.What the book does well.ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s a great sales pitch for the concept of scenario-building. I’m sold on the idea.It’s very approachable and easy reading. There are a lot of anecdotes, asides about history, culture, and social observations. I appreciated Peter Schwartz’s keen powers of observation.That said, the writing style is mostly in the form of anecdotes, most of which will be confusing to readers who did not grow up in the 80s. The book’s age is a constant distraction.There are a lot of excellent academic level concepts on scenario-building, how it work, why it works, how to make it work. Most of it is summarized in the index, which is not to miss.Overall, it’s a great introduction to the concepts of scenario planning. It has many flaws, but it’s well worth reading.

A fine read on the foundations and methods of scenario planning. I learned a great deal about the why of this type of planning, not just the how. It was a bit surrealistic, since it was published before Sept. 11, 2001. Some of the possible futures of U.S. society suggested in the book, in hindsight, appeared naive or quaint. Yet, even then, it was instructive reading, because it made for a great example of how unforeseen events actually do change the scenario planning process in real ways. I enjoyed the book, evidenced by the fact that I started and finished it while on a Caribbean cruise. It kept my attention even then.

This is a must read for those interested in strategic thinking, strategic visioning, and in moving beyond biases and assumptions to imagine the future. Schwartz noted, "I wrote this book [to show individuals] how to begin using a method for investigating important decisions" (p. xiii). He continued to note that the point isn’t to pick one future but instead to " make strategic decisions that will be sound for all plausible futures. . . . Scenario planning is about making choices today with an

understanding of how they might turn out" (pp. xiv, 4). Such an important discussion and aspect of imagining new possibilities! In an appendix Schwartz identifies the steps to developing scenarios.

I belief that I possess a strong and reliable gut-feel or instinct. I also have a good knack for organising and quantifying information to help me in the process of decision making. Together these factors which have helped me through many decisions, from moderately difficult to life changing decisions, such as immigration.But Peter Schwartz’s book takes planning for the future to a much higher level. Subtitled "Planning for the future in an uncertain world", in "The art of the long view" Schwartz illustrates his own successful recipe for practical futurism.He outlines a "scenario" approach for developing a strategic vision. This approach involves developing 2 - 4 varying scenarios. The approach is based upon a series of steps for developing each scenario, preparing for the likelihood each scenario, and recognising early on which one (or more than one) scenario is actually eventuating, so that appropriate steps can be taken.Although the proposed scenarios are to be presented in a narrative form (which may make some people uncomfortable), the "Long View" approach is quite methodical (though it could perhaps have been presented in a more organised fashion). Apart from that, the approach holds much advantage. I expected a full-on business book glorifying globalisation, knowing that Schwartz had been involved with several multi-nationals like the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company. I was therefore pleasantly surprised with Schwartz’s environmental leanings and his inclusion of the ecological impacts of decisions in scenarios.Taking into account the success rate of teams in which Schwartz has been involved with in the past, the scenario developing strategy definitely seems to me to have much merit. (It would be interesting to see how his predictions for 2005 turns out - in 3 years time). Now if we could only get politicians to read this book and look past their re-election windows. Highly recommended.

The Art of the Long View is one of the best books I’ve read about foresight. The publication contains many valuable examples of business use of foresight with particular emphasis on the scenario method. What can you learn from a book? First of all, the publication opens your eyes to the possibilities offered by foresight in every area of Ãƒ Â¢Ã â ¬Ã â ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â life. Second, the author puts emphasis on business applications convincing about the need and possibilities of foresight for both corporations and small businesses. Thirdly, backed by the experience of the author examples are illustrative, interesting and compelling. A great idea is contained in the publication of a letter to his son. Also note the appendix describing the steps to developing scenarios.Author of The Art of the Long View is a former employee of SRI International, Shell and

co-founder of the Global Business Network. From today, Peter Schwartz is my guru of the foreight and scenario method.

Very interesting, use as a reference.

Great book to read for any time. But if the book is rewritten with today's events, it will have a greater impact

The Art of the Long View by Peter Schwartz is the book that popularized the tool of scenario planning and made the case at Royal Dutch Shell a classic for many business schools on building sustainable businesses. I find that the frameworks provide a useful complement to my work on implementing lean in operations.

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